

REMARKS

Claim Objections

Applicants respectfully disagree with the claim objections.

Claim 1 recites that the microcomponent (7) and the line connections (8, 9, 16) can be pressed against one another by a lifting device (6). Claim 2 differs in that it further specifies that the pushing together occurs by the pressing of the microcomponent (7), while claim 3 differs in that it further specifies that the pushing together occurs by the pressing of the line connections (8, 9, 16).

Claim Rejection Under 35 USC § 112 and 101

These rejections are moot in view of the amendments clarifying the claims.

The Office Action inquires about the meaning of the term “coding of the microcomponent connection system” and indicates that this term was interpreted as the orientation of the microcomponent when placed into the connection system. Applicants do not object to this interpretation, but provide the following comments. According to the German text of the filed PCT application the “coding of the microcomponent connection system” might include many different means of ensuring proper orientation and alignment of the microcomponent that is inserted in the accommodation system. Therefore the non-specific “coding” might be interpreted somewhat more generally, but of course includes the specific features explained thereafter, namely a recess and corresponding projection of microcomponent and connection system. See the specification on page 7, lines 14-29 providing a description of the above discussed materials.

The Office Action also inquires about the meaning of the term “sprung electrical contacts” and indicates that this term will be interpreted broadly as “any spring mounted electrical contact.” In this regard, please note that the difference between “sprung” and “spring-mounted” appears to have been lost in translation from the German text of the PCT application to the US filed English text. According to the German text of the application the intended difference between “federnd” and “federnd gelagert” is the difference between elastic or springy (sprung) electrical contacts that are themselves movably mounted to the connection system, and spring-mounted electrical contacts that can be rigid or stiff, but are themselves movably mounted to the connection system whereas their position is controlled by spring means ensuring optimal contact with the microcomponent after insertion into the connection system. Applicants respectfully request that the proper interpretation discussed

above be used during examination, and in this regard, the term “sprung” is amended to more clearly in English reflect that the contact is an “elastic or springy electrical contact.”

Claim Rejection Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-4, 6, 7 and 9 are rejected as allegedly anticipated by WO ‘681.

The features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16 are incorporated into claim 1, from which all other claims depend with the exception of claim 17, rendering this rejection moot. New independent claim 17 also includes all the features of current claim 1.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

All the rejections are moot in view of the amendments to the claims as discussed below.

Claims 5 and 8 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO ‘681 in view of US ‘026. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claims 10, 14 and 21 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO ‘681 in view of US ‘725. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO ‘681. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, wherein claims 13, 14 and 16 were not rejected over this reference.

Claim 13 is rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO ‘681 in view of US ‘827. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, wherein claims 11, 12, 14 and 16 were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claim 15, 16 and 17 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO ‘681 in view of US ‘402. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, wherein claims 11, 12, 13 and 14 were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claims 18, 19, 24, 26-29, 31-33 and 37 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over

WO '681. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, wherein claims 13, 14 and 16 were not rejected over this reference.

Claims 22 and 23 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO '681. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, wherein claims 13, 14 and 16 were not rejected over this reference.

Claim 25 is rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO '681 in view of US '190. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claim 30 is rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO '681 in view of US '406. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claims 34, 35 and 38 is rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO '681 in view of US '782. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Claim 36 is rejected as allegedly unpatentable over WO '681 in view of US '560. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to claim 1 which now recites features/elements of former claims 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16, which claims were not rejected over this combination of references.

Even though not necessary since the rejections are readily overcome by the amendments to the claims, applicants provide the following comments on the rejections.

The references that were cited against any of the claims whose features / elements are now recited in claim 1 are WO '681 (claims 1, 11, 12 and 14) and WO '681 in combination with US '827 (claim 13) and in combination with US '402 (claim 16). The disclosures of these references are discussed below.

Contrary to the allegations WO '681 does not teach hollow rams that are axially movable or spring-mounted.

Of course, the positions thereof change together with the accommodation device; but

such movement is no axial movement relative to the accommodation device, which is what is recited in the claims of the present application.

Also, electrical connections usually do not use elaborate spring-mounted contacts as there is normally no reason for them. US '402 teaches spring-mounted electrical contacts for high voltage connections to electrodes only when the platform disclosed therein is in its withdrawn position (see column 8, lines 57 – 60). There is absolutely no reason provided by the prior art in the present case to use such spring-mounted connections in the claimed microcomponent connection system. Merely, the existence thereof in a completely different system is disclosed by an unrelated reference, which is not adequate for establishing obviousness.

WO '681 also does not teach additional sealing rings around the aperture of hollow rams to provide better sealing conditions if pressed onto the microcomponent.

Concentrically arranged sealing rings are common in other fields of art, as in US '827, which teaches the use of sealing rings in order to prevent leakage in parallel reactors. Contrary to the present invention, these prior art parallel reactors are not in a microcomponent connection system, which is, e.g., adapted to quick and easy exchange. Therefore one of ordinary skill in the art would not find it obvious to take this single element of the reference reactors and include this specific feature into a completely different system with different requirements and considerations. Additionally, the sealing rings in the present claims are used in a different way, e.g., by being used in conjunction with hollow rams that are spring mounted. One of ordinary skill in the art would expect the effect of spring-mounting the hollow rams being somewhat reduced and impaired by adding sealing rings, which are usually soft or elastic.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

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